The Marker Lamp

Volume 54 **Number 4** **Fall 2008**

The South Side and Rio Mesa just one of the great layouts you will have to opportunity to view next year in Dallas.

Trinity River Interchange

FWRR 1 3 DRR

LSR 2009

June 3 - 7, 2009

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The Marker Lamp

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National Model
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YOUTH

VACANT

President's Message

by Jerry Schoenberg, MMR

DIFFERENT SCALES for DIFFERENT FOLKS!

Did you ever wonder why your hobby friends picked the scales they model? I have. The NMRA recognizes 20 types of what it calls popular scales. They range from Z to 1". Nine of these scales are the narrow gauge equivalent of a popular scale. Only a few of these 20 scales have gotten significant interest by our members.

Those of us in HO don't have to answer the question as often as the reasons for modeling HO may be a little more obvious. Usually, they include availability of products and available room for a layout or module. Also, magazines and documentation are heavily weighted toward HO scale. Model railroad clubs in HO scale also influence the modeler. When I talked to David Davis, MMR of Carrollton about his layout, he said he really liked the variety offered. "Hey," he said, "It's my railroad, and I pick what I like." This is not uncommon thinking in our hobby.

However, one may argue that smaller scales provide a lot more "railroad" for the space, and larger scales provide more detail and prototype accuracy. In this day and age, manufacturers seem to do an incredible job in designing all scales. When I discussed scales with some of our members, I was surprised to see a common "start-up thread" of either Lionel or American Flyer. Oh, how I remember the controversy as to which was best—Lionel, right?

I know you can go smaller, but Z scale is as far as I want to think about. I asked Tom Browning why he picked Z scale. Buying a magazine on a business trip led him to a hobby shop which in turn led him to a club. He helped prepare a Z scale module for the 2001 NMRA convention in St. Louis, MO and then decided to do some home modeling. "I did not have a clue what I was doing, but I found scratch building to be fascinating." He built a Z scale bridge that would be enormous in any other scale and decided to have it judged. With great success in the AP program, he was hooked on Z. Tom enjoys down sizing HO kits and scratch building the parts. His Z scale layout is well on its way.

There certainly are more N scale modelers out there than Z. At first, I thought cost played a part, but when I looked at the price of Micro-Trains N scale cars, I knew differently. I spoke with member Olaf Melhouse, better known to his friends as "Ole", about his choice of N scale. Ole started with Lionel in 5th grade. His paper route took him to an HO display at a drug store. He went to HO because "N scale did not run good." In 1980, he tried again and found out N scale had come a long way. He worked two blocks from Caboose Hobbies in Denver and lived in an apartment. N scale was the best choice for him. As president of an N scale club, he started thinking of his own N scale layout that he has today. Ole says, "N scale operates as well as any and requires less room. I can tell you however, they are not cheap. I was surprised at how many more structures are required."

HOn3 is the narrow gauge equivalent to HO scale. I talked with HOn3 modeler Duane Richardson, MMR about this scale. He started in HO and joined an HO club. Duane and his Dad tried to create an interest in narrow gauge, but the bottom line was that it was difficult to find a quality product. "It was a constant problem keeping them running." A trip to Colorado, riding the Cumbres and Toltec and then the Durango-Silverton trains did it for him. He said he just "had to model that scenery." The good news is "most of the HO stuff works, and it doesn't take any more room." He is very pleased with the big steps recently taken in quality. Duane says, "The Blackstone and Micro-Trains rolling stock and power are now fantastic."

S or 3/16" scale takes many back to American Flyer. Member Chip Romig started with an N scale layout on a pool table, and when he had the room, he went to HO. From the first HO sound, Chip was hooked. "Sound played a major part in my change to S scale also." In '92, I bought a GP9 and found all that room for a real speaker. At first, I just ran it around the Christmas tree, but soon started replacing my HO layout with S scale." Chip's second locomotive was a brass Mike. He says, "That locomotive just runs forever." Chip is well on his way to finishing a large S scale layout and has been very active in the AP program.

Our *Marker Lamp* editor, MMR and On3 modeler, Chuck Lind told me his Dad was responsible for his start. "He introduced me to Lionel, then HO and an HO club. I liked HO because it seemed "more real." Chuck said that past member, Bob Clarke, got him started in O scale narrow gauge. "We both liked logging, and his engines would actually pull some cars." Chuck revealed that "I got a new wife and a new scale in '92, and I don't regret either one." Availability really improved when Bachmann came on the scene.

It was a pleasure to talk with our member, Brady McGuire about O or ¼" scale. Brady is from Cresson, PA and a PRR fan from the get-go. He was in HO for 30 years. In 1990 he switched to O scale. "I love detailing and scratch building, and my eye sight just would not cut it in HO." Brady states that there was a real resurgence in O scale in the late 1980's with Weaver and Athern providing an inexpensive way to get started. It is always a pleasure to visit those PRR O scale locomotives at Brady's layout.

I think the G scale is another popular scale in our membership. MMR Barry Bogs of Houston has become well known in G scale operations. Also, many have converted to G scale to achieve a garden railroading effort.

Last, but not least, I would be remiss if I did not mention the "big stuff." The term, "Live Steam" sums up both steam and non-steam locomotives. The popular scale is 1.5" or 7 ½" gauge. Those that enjoy this scale do so for many reasons. It is decidedly not product availability, track availability, details, prototype layouts, etc. There is, however, just something unique in actually operating with a full crew and big rolling stock. It is very rewarding to control the operation of a large scale train. Sounds and movement are as real as it gets!

Well, as one member said, "I like all scales, and the friends that have them."

A Word From Jerry's Corner…

Jerry Hoverson Convention Chairman

I'll keep this short and sweet since there's lots of stuff from the "Convention Team Committees".

Just a reminder the **Trinity River Interchange** will be the **3rd to the 7th of June, 2009**, and the host hotel for your LSR Regional Convention in DFW this year will be the **Sheraton Grand,** just north of the DFW airport on Hwy 114.

Before we go any further I want to emphasis that ***this year's convention is just as much for the ladies as it is for the guys.*** So, please see that your better half gets to read this too… especially the last page. I also encourage you both to check out Petticoat Junction in the Marker Lamp. There's an article there about "a gal's perspective on attending a convention for the first time."

Now, here are the updates from

YOUR 2009 CONVENTION TEAM :

SPECIAL EVENTS FOR 2009–Jerry Hoverson & Chris Atkins. Wow, have we got a great special event lined up, **"The Great Trinity River Interchange Train Ride."** a ride on the Grapevine Vintage Railroad.

It will be an adventure back into the glory days of early Texas, riding in 1920' and 30's Victorian style coaches behind an **1896 steam engine, old "Puffy", the oldest continuous operating steam engine in the south**.

The **Great Trinity River Interchange Train Ride** will pull out of the Depot in Grapevine, Texas **Thursday evening** at 7 pm and travel along the famous Cotton Belt Route to the Stockyards National Historic District in Fort Worth.

At the stock yards the Old West will come alive again with great photo opportunities as you watch the crew turn **old Puffy** on the turntable for the return trip back to Grapevine. Also you will have plenty of time to explore this fun part of Fort Worth and do a little shopping or grab a bite to eat at any of the great restaurants in the area.

And, on top of all that, this event is **FREE** to all that attend the Trinity River Interchange. Yes I said **FREE**! It is not an extra fare item, it is not limited to just a few, it is not a cost that is included in your registration fee. **IT IS FREE!**

It is free because it is being ***sponsored*** by the **Lone Star Region** as a benefit for **all** LSR members. Simply show your **Trinity River Interchange** registration badge and walk on board for a nostalgic trip back to the Old West. There will be light refreshments and even some entertainment along the way.

Keep an eye out for ***breaking news*** in future issues of the **Trinity River Interchange Gazette** as updates and possibly even more surprises on this fantastic event unfold!

CLINICS - Paul Richardson.

Here's just a taste of the clinics we've got lined up:

Easy Backdrops by Gary Rush. Learn everything you need to paint your own fantastic backdrops.

Control that Tortoise by Jerry Hoverson. Learn how to build a 556-based circuit to control a tortoise machine from more then one location.

Making Aspen Trees by Charlie Kirk. Learn how to make a forest of Aspens for that Colorado scene.

Operations 101 by Fred Bock and Tom Crosthwait. If you missed this in Houston, here's your chance to attend this outstanding clinic.

And as of this writing, **two more great clinics have been added!!** Be sure and check the next **Trinity River Interchange Gazette** for the details. The rumor is that at least one is being given by a MMR.

COMPANY STORE – Russ Covitt.

The Company Store will offer both a committee shirt and an attendee shirt that will be a different color. A new catalog showing what's available for 2009 should be available in October. Items available at previous LSR conventions including patches, caps and coffee mugs will also be available. If you would like to suggest an item, please e-mail me with information including sources and I will check it out. RUSSRSTUFF@AOL.COM

LAYOUT TOURS – Steve Willis.

Layout tour to showcase Dozens of layouts in the Metroplex

How many times has this happened to you? You've come to a model railroad convention and you want to go see some layouts. But they all seem to be too far away, you aren't familiar with the city, traffic is terrible, and gas prices are outrageous. You just feel like you ought to stay in your room. What a mess! Ever wish there was a better way? Well, thanks to the use of space age technology, there is a better way. It's the Trinity River Interchange Layout Tour! Let us tell you how!

This year, we are planning to bring you over 30 home and club layouts in the Metroplex. Better yet, we are working to find innovative ways for you to see as many as you want. The

Dallas Ft. Worth area has been well known in the region for the large number of fine railroads and generous owners who open for the convention, many only for the LSR. One of the biggest limitations of so many layouts in such a large metropolitan area is that the distances limit the attendees' ability to see more than a few during the open house hours. We are working to amend that in a number of ways. These include:

- Scheduling layout tours throughout the convention.
- Trying to have layouts grouped in the same area to minimize driving time.
- Scheduling around common rush hour bottlenecks or timing the tour to avoid them completely.
- Scheduling popular layouts more than once.
- Early and late tours on Wednesday and Sunday so you can see layouts on your way in and on the way home
- Finding the fastest routes to get you from one layout to the next.
- The Super Tour(s) where you can relax and leave the driving to, well, someone else.

We hope to have something for everybody, from N scale to G scale. There are popular favorites from past tours planned. Some of these layouts have made lots of progress or undergone changes since the last time the LSR was in town. There have even been some expansions… There will also be new layouts on the tour, including at least one large layout that was begun after the last LSR and is already progressed to the scenery stage. There are rumors of another large layout that has recently been begun. **Layouts… We got 'em for 2009!**

And, there will be another big bonus that comes with your 2009 registration. It's a **Guide to Local Dining**. We'll have great food at the hotel in quantity at reasonable prices. You won't have to leave if you don't wish. But what if you get an appetite for something different? Or more importantly, what if your spouse wants something different? We have put together a compendium of dining establishments in close proximity to the hotel. These embrace all manner of cuisine from casual to elegant dining, from local to eclectic. We've included favorites of some of the local modelers, too. And we even have a blue ribbon panel sampling the fare at these restaurants to ensure quality. **Lotsa' good food… We got it for 2009!**

SPONSORS & PRIZES- Larry Swigert.

We are very proud that two great Hobby Shops, **Discount Model Trains** and **HobbytownUSA Dallas** have come on board to help make our 2009 Convention even greater with their generous sponsorship. Joining them are **The Lone Star Region NMRA**, sponsors of the wonderful train ride; **Russ Rail Stuff**; and our printer, **Minuteman Press – Casa Linda**

PROTOTYPE TOURS – Les Brandt.

You may have already heard the news about Prototype Tours – **You get to have a say in what tours we present!** There are so many great prototype things to see in the area we just wanted you to have a say in which ones we go after.

Go to the **Trinity River Interchange** Website and vote for your favorite. Here is the current list under consideration:

- **Dart Facility**
- **TRE Shops**
- **Trinity rail plant**
- **McKinney Avenue Trolley**
- **UP Intermodel yard**
- **Age of Steam Museum**
- **BNSF Control Center**
- **BNSF Aliance yard**
- **Grapevine Vintage RR shops**
- **Grain Elevator**
- **Garland short line "DINGO"**
- **Six Flags shops**

AUCTION – Bill Dryden.

The auction is always a great place to find something special you've been looking for. It's also a great place to unload valuable items that you no longer have a need for. The auction really depends on YOU, the convention-goer. The more of you that bring items, the bigger and better the auction will be and the more money YOU will make!

So start digging through the storage closets and under the layout or where ever you can think of and bring those treasures to the convention. Hey, maybe you'll make enough to start a whole new layout!

PUBLICITY – Larry Swigert.

Throughout the year, you will be receiving the latest edition of **"The Trinity River Interchange Gazette,"** the official newspaper of the 2009 convention. It will feature "breaking news" to keep you updated on all of the new and exciting events as they are added to this year's convention fun.

Here's where we need your help! A recent LSR survey showed that some of the NMRA member information was either outdated or wrong. So, make sure that the LSR has your correct email & home address and phone number by:

-Emailing it to:

NMRAMemberInfo@AOL.com

-Or sending it regular mail to:

LSR/NMRA Member Information
6548 Clearhaven Circle
Dallas, Texas 75248.

Make sure you don't miss out on *anything* by sending in your information **TODAY**!

NON-RAIL – Barbara Smith, Julia Davis, Mary Lou Schoenberg, Fredda McPherson, Phyllis Hoverson.

Whoo Hee! This here has been a gosh dern busy summer! We've had storms aplenty and durned hot weather ta boot!! It's cooled down a might but them thar Non-Rail Gals for the Trinity River Interchange for 2009 are still buzzing around busier than bees for you folks!! They've a bin workin' like crazy to make sure you all have some fine things to do!!

Now, ya'll remember that they've got that **Project Linus**? It's a fine thing ya'll be doing; makin them soft fleece blankets for little kiddies in hospitals!! It's purly marvelous that it doesn't need no gal dern machine for sewing either!! They'll have some soft fleece material and other stuff to make them but ya'll can bring some fleece too if'n ya want to. Jest ya remember that these .is for little tykes so please make sure the pictures on it is good fer them!!

Now them ladies is a cookin up a couple of fine tour idears! There's this great huge shoppin place called Grapevine Mills Outlet Mall. Ya'll have a fine time shoppin and eatin at this here place. I here tell they've got over 1.6 million sq. ft. of indoor stores, restaurants and entertainment places! They've got over 180 stores ta choose from like Abercrombie & Fitch, Victoria's Secret, Forever 21, Old Navy, Group USA, Rainforest Café and Chili's Too! So even though you can expect the summer weather to be warm next June, you can be cool while you **"Shop Till Ya Drop"** ya'll keep practicing!! This here time ya'll can do on yer own. Yer Sheraton Grand Hotel has some great transportation to git ya thar!!

They's a workin' on another trip. It's a fine wine tasting in downtown Grapevine. Ya knows; Grapevine has become well known fer it's real tasty Texas wines. It all started about 1844 when us settler's first moved to the prairie that earned its name from the wild Mustang grapes that grew thar. It's all growed up real fine and we're real excited to visit one of them fine wine places. We'll keep ya'll posted when they've got everthing all fixed up fine and dandy.

Now, one more thing them gals want me to remind you of. Don't forget to be a workin' on your arts & crafts project for the contest. They've got some fine ideas up they're sleeve for all of you. The theme is "Crossroads of Texas". Think, Indian trails, cattle drives, railroad tracks, highways and airline routes that all do a crissin and a crossin through here.

Ya'll can git more information on-line at the Trinity River Interchange 2009 at www.trinityriverinterchange.com.

SO GUYS AND GALS, MARK THAT CALENDAR TODAY FOR JUNE 7th thru 9th
'CAUSE IT'S GONNA' BE FUN!!

See ya thar' Podnah !

STOLEN

USA-Trains 1:29-scale ("G-Gauge") Union Pacific "Big Boy" 4-8-8-4 die-cast steam locomotive model, retail value $4000. The model is a Limited Edition, with only 70 of that number, UP #4012, black & silver paint, produced. It was stolen from Lone Star Trains & Collectibles in San Antonio, Texas around 11pm Tuesday night, October 21, 2008. Thieves backed a maroon pickup truck to the glass front door, shattered the glass, snatched the locomotive and tender from the counter display, and made off. New the locomotive came in a wooden carrying case which the thieves left behind. Locomotive and tender together are 57" long (almost 5-feet), and weigh about 75 pounds; witnesses say either the locomotive or tender was dropped ("dinged?") during the robbery. Please contact Clay Kinsner at Lone Star Trains, telephone: 210-655-4665 (e-mail: clayk@lonestartrains.com) if you have information leading to the recovery of the model and/or apprehension of the thieves.

Special Contest for Dallas

As I have for the past couple of years I have come up with another special contest to try and get more entries into the Contest Room.

Square Foot Contest

The rule is fairly simple on this. Build whatever you want in just 1 square foot. This means a 12"x12" area (not 1"x144"). It can be a Diorama, On-Line Structure or Off-Line Structure. Like the Peanut Butter Lid Contest, nothing can hang off the side and I am sure Duane will come up with another gauge to keep everyone honest.

So get out your tools and let your mind run wild and get something entered in the Contest Room this next year.

See you in Dallas!

FROM THE PAST (Fall 1983)

By Jim Long, MMR LSR Historian

LSR President Ed Quin noted that shortly after the new year (1984) the NMRA will be entering into a grand effort to complete our Headquarters building in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The building is up, we've moved in, and two offices have walls, doors, lights, ceiling tiles, and are usable to conduct the day-to-day business of the NMRA. The rest of the building is a shell, bare to the rafters! There is no landscaping. Our visitor-members are surprised at the magnificence of the outward appearance and appalled at the starkness of the interior.

Bob Clarke of Schertz, Texas says that very few structures retain that fresh painted look and obtaining that faded paint look is tough to achieve. Bob says try using felt tip markers to achieve the faded paint so commonly found on structures. Markers are available at most art supply stores: they come in varying shades of a multiple of colors. The brand he uses is "Design Art Markers" by Eherhard Faber. To use, simply coat the wood parts of your structure prior to assembly. Should you want darker results, coat the wood more than once or use a darker shade. Be sure to vary the intensity of the colors especially for board by board construction.

Price Bradshaw of Plano, Texas gives a report on the 1983 North Texas Mini-Convention held on Saturday, the 23rd of April. Some 1200 people attended the day long event at the Quality Inn in Irving, Texas. The wealth of diversity of model railroading was fully displayed on the home layout tour available to the attendees, which included a 30 year old Lionel layout, a large 'N' scale modular set-up, Malcolm Furlow's Hon3 wonders, a layout built above eye level, a railroad run by a wireless remote throttle, and the largest layout in north Texas. Charles Chambers had prototype movies (many new ones) running all day long. The six live clinics offered covered topics as varied as traction (by Leroy King), remote control (by Keith Gutierrez), and hands-on turnout construction (by Bob Mason).

Mastering Modeling - Staining Wood Part II

By Tracy Mitchell and Terry "The Canadian" Mitchell MMR's

In this installment we are going to add to the Staining Wood Article, we did last year. Part 1 can be found in the Fall 07 issue of the Marker Lamp. When you combine this article with the first one, you should have a good choice of stains for wood to work with.

Tobacco Juice and Water

This is another natural stain we have used in the past with great success. This works great if you want the wood to have a brownish tint. To make it, you take a bag of chewing tobacco (try to stay away from the mint flavors) and add the full contents to a nylon stocking and tie a knot in the stocking to ensure the tobacco won't fall out. Then you take the bag and put it into a pan of water. We use slightly more than a pint of water. Then bring the water to a boil for about twenty minutes. Remove the stocking and store the liquid in a plastic container. We then take the strip wood and soak it in the stain for a few minutes. Allow the wood to dry in the sun before using, because this is a water based stain. We need to repeat this…make sure you sun dry the wood to counter act the swelling of the wood grain. This amount will last almost a lifetime. We are still on the same batch we made ten years ago. Also of note, this is a natural insect repellent. Bugs hate the taste a Tobacco juice.

Acorn Juice Weathering

This is another Natural weathering stain. This was taught to us by Byron Spampinato, the guy that likes to look at models through binoculars. He said it is used as a stain in "Basket Weaving." We will let it go as to where he learned this technique, but isn't basket weaving therapy for mental patients?

To make the stain, collect acorns from Oak trees. When is the best time of the year to do this... watch the squirrels, when they start gathering them up, so should you. Ideally the best time is Sept/Oct when they are on the ground as they are right now. In Houston, thanks to hurricane Ike, acorns are scattered all over the place. After you collected a good amount, soak them in Alcohol in a glass jar with a lid. Pickle jars work the best because they seal the jar. The longer they soak the darker the stain is. It also helps to crack the acorns before soaking them. You can even pulverize them, but be advised, you can lose some of the stain in the pulverizing process. The stain can be applied with a brush or you can soak the wood and allow to dry in the sun like you do for the tobacco juice.

Flo Stain Brand Paint

Or as it is called now Roundbell stain. Floquil discontinued the Flo-Stain brand but Wayne Weiss (Houston Roundhouse now Salida Roundhouse) has picked up the colors and is marketing it under the Roundbell name. There are several shades to choose from including Pine, Oak, Maple, as well as others. Driftwood and Teak are the best color of stains to use. Driftwood is as the name suggests a gray tint. While Teak is a more brownish yellow stain.

Prismacolored Pencils

Simply put, they are colored pencils you used to use in school to color maps. They can be bought individually or in sets and they come in hundreds of colors. They are found in art or craft supply like Hobby Lobby or Michaels. They also are on the web at www.dickblick.com. In the stores they are over a buck, at dickblick they are a little cheaper even with postage. They have a wider selection of colors. We buy the browns, greys, and rust colored shades mostly. In other words the Earth Tones.

To use them, we like to apply very little pressure and lightly rub them on details to show age. I have more control with a pencil in my hand than a brush.

We also never seal the model after the model is weathered with Prismacolors. Unlike chalks they won't fade or fall off when handling. Don't worry if you make a mistake with Prismacolors, simply wet your finger (by licking) and wipe off the Prismacolor and start over.

You can also soften the pencils with vinegar. Just dip the pencil into vinegar is all you need to do. We also take a Q tip and dip it into the vinegar and rub that onto the model coated with Prismacolor pencils. This gives a good streaking effect.

Bragdon Pigments

This is taken off Joel's website "This weathering powder will adhere to any non-glossy surface. It is NOT chalk. One quick step gives a very realistic rusty, dusty or sooty surface - instantly. No drying or curing is necessary. Use sparingly; a little goes a long way. This product is made from real rust and other weathering agents that have been ball milled to a particle size over 100 times finer than chalk and blended with a pressure sensitive, dry adhesive. Self adhesive to most surfaces. Nonmagnetic and Nontoxic.

This comes in a variety of shades and sizes to work with. Basically you work it like you would chalks but no after spray is needed. Be forewarned this stuff will stay where you put it even on clothes! Strong stuff.

Doc O'Briens Weathering pigments

This is another brand of weathering powders that are self adhesive. They are made by Micro Mark and come in a 12 pack of pigments for 19.95. We have not tried them because we have a life time supply of Bragdon. On reading the sale pitch in a Micro Mark catalog, they appear to be very similar to Bragdon. The only difference we see is they will clean up with soap and water.

Builders in Scale

Silver Stain is a pre-mix wood stain. It comes in a 4 oz bottle and costs 7.98. It is alcohol base and frankly we think it is nothing more than India Ink and alcohol that anyone can make. We feel like there is not any need to waste your money on something that you can make for far less and get far more for your buck.

Weathers It

Experts say this is not a stain but a chemical reaction that takes place within the wood itself. If this is true then it has some corrosive tendencies. We have used it and we do not like the results of it as well as a true stain. This company also makes a product called Blackens It – used on metals such as brass, nickel silver, or copper. Not to be used on aluminum or steel. They also market a product called Patina It. As the name implies it adds a blueish green tint found on copper surfaces. The Blacken It and Patina It, we recommend for those spots where it was created for.

Continued on page 14

For the Narrow Minded…

By Duane Richardson, MMR

I was recently asked why I chose to model narrow gauge. For me it was easy. In the summer of 1976 my family and I went on vacation to Colorado and New Mexico. Now, I was 6 at the time but those memories still live on and helped to drive my modeling towards the narrow gauge. I liked the area, the scenery and the charm of those little trains going places where the big ones just couldn't go. After the conversation was over I was still giving it some thought and I began to wonder why that struck me the way it did? What is the magic of Narrow Gauge? What makes it so charming? A recent interest for me has been logging. It started while doing some research for this column a few issues back. It's always been in the background for me but this was a chance to read up on it. There is something pretty cool about a Shay or Climax hauling logs through the woods…but why? What makes it cool? What makes tiny trains moving through rugged terrain so appealing?

As I gave this some thought I went back to the beginning. My family all worked for the Frisco and if the railroad were still around, and running like it was when I was a kid, the chances are that I might have followed in my Dad, Uncle and Grandfather's foot steps. Even with that in mind there has just never been any interest to model modern standard gauge. To me, a diesel just seems to magically roll by but with a steam engine you can see everything moving and know what makes it move. Even before I took the plunge into narrow gauge modeling I was modeling the steam era. Of course, diesels are featured on many narrow gauge lines as well. There really isn't anything romantic about steam. The haze of time has created that for us. Anybody who worked with them will tell you that it's hard, dirty work. It's little wonder why the railroads went to diesel power even if it took more units to pull the same trains.

Since I hadn't wanted to do anything modern it led me to wonder if it was just the appeal of modeling something long gone. I have friends who get all excited when the next train rolls by down the street. They can recite each engine type, where it came from and all those little details that tend to stick in our minds (and seem to shove out the things we really need to remember). Some of these same friends will pull over on the side of the road to watch one go by and or take pictures. I can't see the appeal in that but I will ***pay*** to go do the same thing in Colorado to see Narrow Gauge. It can be the sole reason for a vacation where I can stand alongside like narrow minded guys, and gals, (sometimes hip deep in the snow in the process) and talk about all those same trivial little details only it's about the decades old equipment that is rolling by.

So maybe it's just a distance thing. I don't get to see it all the time so I haven't been desensitized. I tossed out that pretty fast since I know that if I could make a living doing what I do I would move up there in a heart beat. The scenery around where I like to model is just breath taking. While I grew up in the hills of Missouri, I now live in a pretty flat area in North Texas (flat to me at any rate) so the grandeur of the mountains could be a big reason. My grandparents' farm had an Aspen out front so maybe the trees in Colorado turning yellow each fall brings back some deep psychological feelings from my childhood. Nah…this is a hobby and that's just too deep.

From reading about various narrow gauge railroads across the US I found a similar thread in each company's history. They each came along, made a bunch of money up front and then started to struggle to get by only to die off. During that middle to end time, maintenance was deferred as long as possible. Many of the buildings, cars and locomotives would fall into various states of disrepair. This offers a broad range of effects we can model. You can model the era when the line was making money and things were kept up or you can model the leaner times and build everything on the ragged edge of falling apart. Oddly enough, a good portion of us model that falling apart era. For some, it's what they remember. They, like me, saw the trains as a kid and want to capture that piece of history as they remember it. To me, while almost falling down, these buildings and cars had a special character. The peeling paint and faded lettering seemed to show the effect of time and place. It seems to be symbolic of the struggle to get the trains through the mountains.

The lack of money also led the various shop crews to create something from nothing in many cases. All kinds of home made equipment were created to get by. Everything from simple cars to the Galloping Goose type rail busses came to be as one more chance to hold off abandonment. Maybe that's part of the deal as well. It's like something we would do with our own layouts. They were Kitbashing and scratch building with the real thing. Does that make us some sort of kindred spirit?

The more I thought about it the more I realized it was all of these reasons. Each was a piece to the puzzle and had its own merits. It simply is what it is. All of these reasons combine together to create something magical that draws us in. It's something that lights a fire in each of us and it's true of each railroad we build, be it standard or narrow gauge.

Until next time...keep the boiler full, the fires hot and the wheels on the rails.

Company Store

	HO		N-Scale
Casey Lines	OUT		$ 5.00
Texas & African	$5.00		OUT
Waco Austin & Bryan	$5.00		$ 5.00
Anniversary Car 1951	OUT	per set	$35.00
Anniversary Cars 2001	OUT	per set	$35.00
ITC - Bob Clarke	$10.00	per set	$35.00
Quin Lines	$12.00		

Check your layout and be sure you have one of each *special run* Region car. If not we can take care of the shortage post haste.

Other items available

Cloth Region Patches	$5.00 each
Auto/Window Region Decal	$ .50
N Scale Nevadun Decals	$2.00 per sheet
HO&N Scale Daw Cha Southern Decals	$3.00 per sheet

Shipping

Please add $5.00 for up to 3 cars and add $1.00 for patches and decals

Eunice Linda, Dispatcher
3028 Cumberland
Waco, TX 76707-1219
254-754-5535
E-mail: jlinda@hot.rr.com

The Contest at Houston Iron Horse 8

Chuck Lind, MMR - Contest Chairman

Model Contest

Steam Locomotives
1st Barry Bogs – D&RGW 2-8-8-2 L131
2nd David Davis – Tall Pine Lumber Shay #5
3rd Seborn Thomas - Engine 237

Diesel Engines
1st Tracy Mitchell – MKT F3A #64C&F3B
2nd Tracy Mitchell – MKT ASIGM #140
3rd Tracy Mitchell – 83A

Traction & Other Motive Power
1st Davis Davis – DTS "Dos Equis Flyer"
2nd Tracy Mitchell – High Rail Speeder Chicken Coop
3rd Tracy Mitchell – Rail Speeder "Squatch"

Passenger Cars
1st Tracy Mitchell – Rio Grande Southern #3
2nd Bob Brendle – Westcliff & Alton Mail Car #5
3rd Bob Brendle – Westcliff & Alton #8

Freight Cars
1st Barry Bogs – 8000 Gallon UTLX Tank Car
2nd Steve Barkley – NP #94911 Reefer
3rd Tom Browning – Center Beam Flat Car

Maintenance of Way
1st David Davis – Tall Pine Lumber Co Blacksmith Car
2nd Tracy Mitchell – D&RGW Flanger OH
3rd Tracy Mitchell – RGS Short Caboose #401

Complete Trains (Popular Vote)
Bob Brendle – West Cliff & Alton Passenger Train

Off-Line Structure
1st Bob Sabol – Abandoned Building
2nd Jack Merkel – Stock Pens
3rd Duane Richardson – Colorado & Silver River

Bridges & Trestles
1st David Currey – N Scale Curved Trestle
2nd Kelly Rurrell – Curved Steel Viaduct
3rd David Davis – One Lane Wood Bridge

Displays
1st David Davis – Keith's Classic Diorama
2nd Byron Spampinato – Branchline Water Tower
3rd Duane Richardson – Bitter Creek Lumber #5

Photography Contest

Prototype Photographs – Black & White
1st Chris Atkins – C&T 488 at Coal Tower
2nd Duane Richardson – Hardest Working Man
3rd Chris Atkins – C&T 488 at Water Tank

Prototype Photographs – Color
1st Duane Richardson – Cold Night
2nd Jim Lemmond – Western 2-8-0
3rd Chris Atkins – Morning Line Up

Model Photographs – Black & White
1st Chris Atkins – High Bridge
2nd Chris Atkins – Sand Tower

Model Photographs – Color
1st Chris Atkins – Rio Grande Crossing ATSF
2nd Chris Atkins – Santa Fe 3751 on High Bridge
3rd Chris Atkins – C&O Steam Turbine

Arts & Craft

Railroadiana
1st Mary Lou Schoenberg – Coasters

General
1st Fredda McPhearson – Porcelain Hand painted Tea & Toast set
2nd Jo Ann Belsley – Bracelet with Heart Charm
3rd Judith Neufeld – Cookies in a jar

Needlework
1st Julia Davis – Housecoat

Theme – Rodeo
1st Patricia Willis – Rodeo Clown in Barrel

Most Popular Arts & Craft
Fredda McPhearson – Porcelain Hand painted Tea & Toast set

Best in Show Arts & Craft
Fredda McPhearson – Porcelain Hand painted Tea & Toast set

Participation
Tracy Mitchell – 14 Entries 1043.5 points

Best Kit Built
Byron Spaminato – Branchline Water Tower

Architecture Award
David Davis – Keith's Classic Diorama

Tree Award
Loren Neufeld – Tree House Observatory

Peanut Butter Lid Contest
1st David Davis – Tall Pine Blacksmith Car
2nd Byron Spaminato – Branchline Water Tower
3rd Duane Richardson – Bitter Creek Lumber

Bob Clarke Logging Award
Loren Neufeld – Backwood Water Tank

Most Popular Model
Brian Block – Boat House

Novice Best in Show
Jack Merkel – Santa Fe Stock Pens

Best in Show Model
Loren Neufeld – Backwood Water Tank

Thanks to all of those who entered and we look forward to an even bigger and better contest in 2009.

Description of Construction of Hand-Laid Track and Turnouts

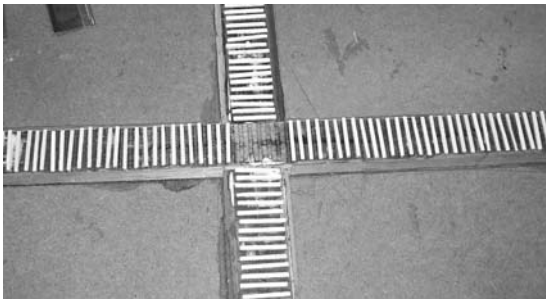
By Robert G. Mangrum, NMRA # 080219

I began the process of the hand laid track laying requirement by selecting a piece of board, 4' x 3' in size, and then framing the board so it would be easier to work with. Materials used were the Micro Engineering medium spikes while wooden ties selected for use were manufactured by two different companies: Micro Engineering regular length non weathered and Kappler Sugar pine 16' switch ties non weathered. My initial plan was to use Life-like foam road bed and Mid West cork as the foundation for the track laying. It was quickly discovered that these materials would not provide any bite for the spikes. Removing the cork which had already been glued down using Elmer's glue, I realized I needed a soft wood to act as roadbed for the project.

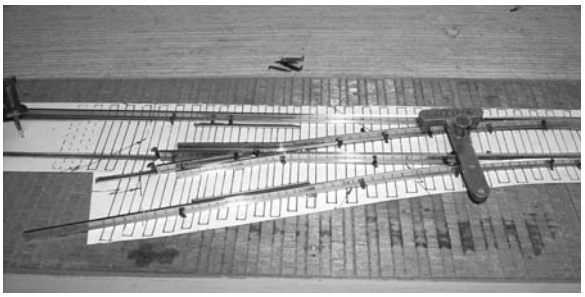
Having a supply of old Tru Scale roadbed left from the late 1950s-early 1960s, I chiseled the molded road bed off the wood and proceed to glue the Tru Scale down and the glued the wooden ties on to the wood using Elmer's Carpenter's Wood Glue.

After the glue had dried, I began laying the track; I chose to use nickel silver code 100 rail. Using two rail guides to align the rail, I began spiking the rail to each tie. As I proceeded I continued to check the gauge to insure the track was properly spaced. I also used a Micro Mark track car to check the trackability of the track.

The first type of track work attempted was a 90 degree crossing.



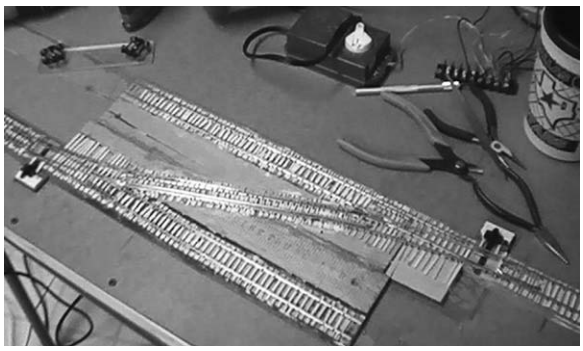
The second was a left hand number 4 turnout using a NMRA Turnout template.



As I finished each piece of track selected for the requirement, I wired it and checked whether the loco could travel through the piece of track work. I wired each piece to a terminal strip and from there to the power pack. Gaps were made as needed in the particular piece of track work.

Once all track work was complete, checked and wired, I oiled to tops of the rail and then used Krylon Ruddy Brown, Flat Black, and Gray Primer to weather the ties and rail.

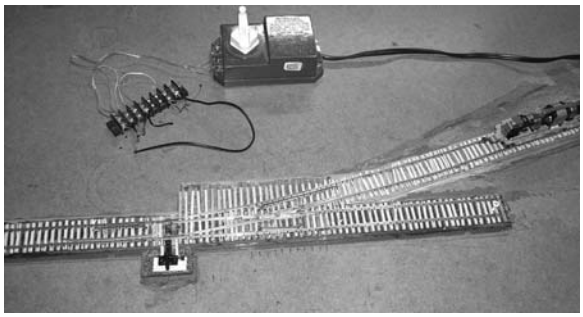
The third piece was a crossover using number 4s with NMRA template. Caboose Industries hand throws were fitted to the specific turnout.



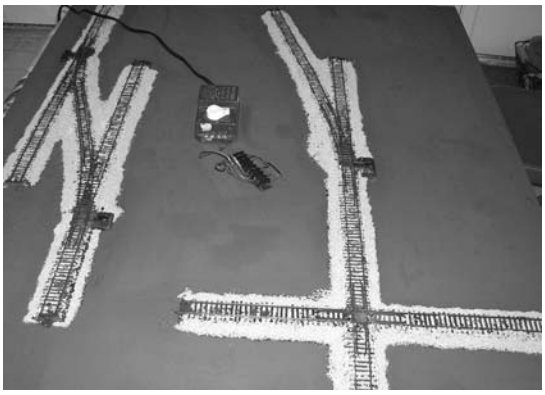
Once that dried, I removed the paint from the tops of the rails and rechecked each section for trafficability and electrical power. I then used Woodland Scenics B1 387 Buff coarse ballast to ballast the track.

After the ballast glue had dried, I again rechecked each section for trafficability and electrical power. I then finished the top of the board to make the project more ascetically pleasing.

The "big day" came on Saturday, October 11, when two NMRA members drove from DFW to Central Texas (Brown County) to judge Civil, Electrical, and Scenery for AP Certificates. The hard work paid off as I was awarded all three.



Testing with an engine prior to balasting.



Completed trackwork ready for testing and judging.

Election Notice

Elections will be coming soon. This year we will be electing President, Vice-President, Secretary - Treasurer, and the Division Directors of Divisions 1, 3, 5, and 7. If you are interested in running for one of these positions please contact me.

Gary McMills - Nominations Chairman , email santafe@tlxnet.net , or 225-930-0387

New Source Available for Texas Railroad Research

By Robert G. Mangrum

If you are like me, modeling the railroads of Texas in the 20th century, you are always searching for additional references and other resources, especially at university library archives searchable via the internet. Such is now the case. The University of North Texas Libraries has recently created a new web-site, the Portal to Texas History [www.texashistory.unt.edu]. It has over 100,000 content pages representing books, newspapers, diaries and letters with over 200 maps and 14,000 photos completing the collection.

What makes a model railroader excited about this site is that 2,283 items (called records by the UNT Library staff) can be found when the researcher enters "railroads" in the search machine. Ranging from old photos of various locations and railroads to copies of Texas Laws 1822-1897, the site is truly a treasure trove for railroad buffs.

Examples of photos include the MKT station at La Grange and the station at Dublin, the truss bridge in Erath County, and an ATSF baggage cart; print references include various county histories; numerous photos and information about historic buildings such as those found in Palestine, and various photos of train wrecks.

Hurricane IKE Summary

Tracy Mitchell sent me information on the Houston area after hurricane Ike roared through the area. Most of the damage to the modelers in the area were the normal things with a storm like this, fences down, missing shingles and trees blown down (although some managed to damage the house or car as they fell). While most of the railroaders in the area faired fairly well other than the inconvience of no power, which also effected purchasing ice, food and gas. Others didn't fair as well. The Galveston RR Museum took a direct hit and close to 8' of water. The layout is probably a complete loss. Robert Ashcraft lost a good part of his roof which allowed the water to get in and collapsed the ceiling onto his layout. At lease 12" of wet insulation and sheetrock on the layout. In the Beaumont area Steve Barkley lost his G scale outdoor layout and Mickey Taylor had about 3' of salt water in his layout room but it didn't get as high as his layout.

Please keep these fellow railroaders in your thoughts and prayers as they start to rebuild

More on The Pop Loeffler/Gil Freitag Award

Last issue's article about the 2008 Convention noted that the Pop Loeffler award was presented to Bob Barnett and that the award has been renamed the Pop Loeffler/Gil Freitag award. The article didn't note that the award to Bob and the announcement of adding Gil's name to the award were supported by a standing ovation from the banquet attendees. A letter from Rosella Nash, an LSR Life Member for 49 years, reminded us that long-time modelers in the Houston area probably know the most about Pop Loeffler. Those of us who came to model railroading more recently may not understand just what Pop Loeffler contributed to our hobby and the significance of the award.

The award began with, and still is sponsored by, the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club. The first award was made to O. S. "Latt" Lattimore by Pop Loeffler in 1963. Since then, the award has been presented yearly to railroad modelers who have contributed to the LSR membership in ways reminiscent of Pop Loeffler. Among them were Ivan and Rosella Nash, Cliff Robinson, Bobbye Hall, Eunice Linda, Jack Leming, Malcolm Vordenbaum, Pop Loeffler, and Gil Freitag. Dave Milton, who was part of the award's inauguration, told us that Pop Loeffler offered his extensive library as a resource for many Houston modelers, that he gave extensive help on new layouts and he offered encouragement and good advice to modelers new to our hobby. Dave described him as one who was willing to help or to supervise, but that he always encouraged people to pursue their ideas.

If you've attended any of Gil Freitag's clinics at conventions, spent time at his home layout, or been with him as he operates his large scale (live steam size) equipment, then you'll know that he follows in the Pop Loeffler tradition. Being chosen for the Pop Loeffler/Gil Freitag award is very meaningful.

It was the letter from Rosella Nash that got us to find out more about Pop Loffler. Her letter follows.

September 16, 2008

I would like all the members to know I approve and congratulate them about the announcement that the Pop Loeffler award has been renamed the Loeffler/Freitag award. Most of the members that knew Pop Loeffler have passed away and maybe a few of the younger and new members knew him. They know and will remember Gil Freitag for a long time.

I have the small bowl which we received after having the large bowl for a year which Pop Loffler presented to my husband Ivan and I when we were still in Houston.

I enjoy the The Marker Lamp very much and it seems everyone always enjoys the conventions, no matter where they are held, so keep up the good work.

Sincerely

Rosella M. Nash

LSR #1 and NMRA #863 – Life Memberships

Rosella and her husband Ivan joined the NMRA and the LSR as Life Members on January 1, 1959. She now lives in Raton, NM and attends LSR conventions when possible. Rosella helped to organize and promote the early "Railettes" program for members' wives.

Up The Track

By Bill Dryden

Here is the list of the upcoming events within the LSR of which I am aware. I will provide all the information YOU send me or I can glean from other publications, websites, etc., for these events. Additional information may be available through the NMRA *Scale Rails* and/or various trade magazines or various websites. Please forward any and all information about upcoming events or activities in your area, club, etc., to me via email at bdr149@airmail.net. Also, note that all show times and dates are at the discretion of the sponsoring organization and are subject to change. **The upcoming events:**

LSR Convention:

Lone Star Region 58th Annual Convention (2009)
Irving, TX

The Lone Star Region NMRA 58th Annual Convention will be held at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Irving beginning Wednesday, June 3rd and continuing through Sunday, June 7th under the watchful eye of Jerry Hoverson, MMR and Convention Chair, and a fine team of talented volunteer leaders. The Sheraton is conveniently located near DFW Airport. A room rate of $98/night has been negotiated. Other details are being worked out and will be added as the details become more firm — Check the LSR website. **Come all!! PARTICIPATE!!!**

Recurring events and meetings:

DFW Area Lionel Modular Group Meeting
Plano
The DFW Lionel Modular Group meets the second Monday of the month at 6:45 p.m. in the Gladys Harrington Library, 1501 East 18th St.; Plano, TX. For more information call (972) 422-4330.

LSR Division 3 - Northeast Texas Division - Monthly Meeting
Garland
Nicholson Memorial Library, 625 Austin St., Garland, TX Third Saturday of each month. For more information check the Division 3 Page on the LSR website or contact Duane Richardson (duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com)

Houston Area Live Steamers
Hockley ,TX
Come enjoy free train rides on our 7,500 feet of 7½-inch gauge track. Public run days are the 3rd Saturday of the month March thru November. US Hwy 290 and Roberts Road; Times are 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.. We can always open special days for Model Railroaders. For more info go to www.hals.org or contact Peter Bryan at peterb@ppdq.net

North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs Meeting
Irving, TX
The North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs (NTC) meets the third Tuesday of the month. Visit the NTC website www.dfwtrainshows.com for more information about the NTC, its meeting site or its member clubs. All model railroaders welcome.

Events and Shows:

November

1st – 2nd **Texas & Pacific Depot and Museum Train Show and Extravaganza**
Sat. 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Sun. 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Adults $6, Children Under 12 Free
Caddo Hall, Marshall Civic Center, US 59 ~ 2 miles north of IH 20, Marshall, TX
Contact: infor@marshalldepot.org or phone:
Web Site: www.marshalldepot.org

8th – 9th **Texas City Model Train Festival**
Sat. 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Sun. 12:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Adults $3, Seniors $2 and Students $1
Texas City Museum and Showboat Pavilion, 400 6th Street; Texas City, TX
Contact: (409) 643-5799
Website: http://www.gcmrrc.org/TrainShow2007.asp

15th – 16th **4th Annual North Louisiana Train Show – *New Location***
Hours: TBA
Admission: TBA
Minden Civic Center; Minden, LA
Contact: msnrailfan@gmail.com; Phone (318) 655-5506 (c)

December

13th – 14th **NTC Fort Worth Area Train Show *New Location***
Sat. 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sun. 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Adults $7, Children 12 and Under Free
Ft. Worth Convention Center; Hall A, 1201 Houston Street, Fort Worth, TX
Website: www.dfwtrainshows.com

January 2009

17th – 18th **NTC Dallas Area Train Show**
Sat. 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sun. 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Adults $7, Children 12 and Under Free
Plano Centre, 2000 East Spring Creek Pkwy., Plano, TX
Contact: www.dfwtrainshows.com

February 2009

21st – 22nd **J.E.T.T.S. Annual Train Show**
Sat. 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sun. 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Adults $6, Children Under 12 Free
Exhibit Building. Longview Fairgrounds, off Hwy 31 on Jaycee Drive
Contact: Homer Fleischer, 711 East Methvin, Longview, TX 75608
Phone: (903) 753-9512, Email: homerflash@aol.com

Two Sides of the Same Coin

Robert "Rocky" Jackson, Educational Chair

After an almost 20 year hiatus, I have recently gotten the coin "bug" again after discovering the existence of numerous coin shows. I cannot even begin to describe the joy I experience when I discover a long sought after coin. The only other experience that even remotely comes close to this jubilation when I find a long sought after freight car or an actual model of a structure on my loosely based Ma & Pa (Maryland and Pennsylvania) Railroad prototype.

After receiving an email from a numismatist (coin collecting) yahoo group the other night, I could not help but see the parallels between coin collecting and model railroading. Some of the numismatists bemoaned the lack of involvement by young people in the hobby. One individual called upon all numismatist members to attempt to recruit kids in order to guarantee the continuation of the wonderful hobby or risk becoming extinct.

Doesn't this warning of becoming a relic and having the hobby die off sound familiar? I believe this is actually part of a larger societal epidemic where technology has supplanted "traditional" hobbies as the American youth's pastime. With all the new gadgets that have come to predominate our model railroading world, we need to discover a way to tap into these technological advances to convince today's youth that model railroading is still a hip hobby to be engaged in. It is on the cutting edge of technology through such advances as Digital Command Control systems, sound systems, remote engine cameras, computer interfacing, and signal systems tied in to computers as well.

In the Lone Star Region, we have been very blessed to have one individual who has sought to reverse this dangerous trend. He decided that he would do something about this situation. Despite periods of discouragement, he never gave up and his perseverance has reaped the rewards of having gotten a couple dozen kids involved in a three to four year time-span. The amazing thing to me about Tom Browning is that he does not even have any children of his own.
His passion sets quiet an example for the rest of us to follow. He shows us what you can accomplish when you are determined to succeed.

Unfortunately, Tom has decided that he needs to step down from this role. Who is willing to take his place? Who will take the reins and take the Lone Star Region to even higher heights in our attempts to get youth involved in our wonderful hobby? If you are interested, please contact Jerry Schoenberg or your division director.

In the same regards, one person cannot accomplish this transformation alone. Several members have donated some of their time voluntarily teaching various model railroading skills in assisting Boy Scout youth in their attempts at achieving a merit badge. These unsung volunteers have donated their time investing in the lives of the next generation of model railroaders. If even 1 in 10 of us successfully recruits just one child into our hobby, think of how many young people we could add to the ranks of the World's Greatest Hobby.

Boy Scouts of America Railroading Merit Badge

By John Stevens National Boy Scout Coordinator

Have you ever sat and thought about where the future model railroaders are going to come from? Although there are areas within the United States where rail traffic is quite heavy, most of the youth of today have no interaction with railroads. Most travel today is done by automobile or airplane. Of course, some major cities have a form of rail transportation, but in most cases it isn't something that you would think about modeling. We know that there is a great interest in trains with very young people today. Have you ever tried to visit your local train museum when Thomas the Tank Engine was going to be there? But, without seeing trains on a regular basis, there is no reason to think that the youth of today will have any interest in becoming the modelers of tomorrow. Without the modelers of tomorrow, the number of modelers in this country will continue to shrink. We all know what happens to the availability of good modeling supplies as the number of modelers decreases.

One of the best ways that we as model railroaders can help grow our hobby is by helping Boy Scouts earn the Railroading Merit Badge. My division has a program that we started in 2002. We present our program twice a year at a local NRHS museum. We divided the merit badge into stations. We limit attendance to 30 scouts so that we have only four or five scouts at each of the stations at any one time. We have presented the program twelve times during which we have had 289 scouts earn the Railroading Merit Badge. Presenting the program is always a lot of work, but it is also very rewarding.

The National Board of Directors knows that there are individuals and divisions throughout the NMRA who are doing a wonderful job of presenting programs to help scouts earn the Railroading Merit Badge. Unfortunately, National doesn't have a record of those programs. As the National Boy Scout Coordinator, I am attempting to gather that information. If you or your division runs a program to help scouts earn the Railroading Merit Badge, we would like to hear about it. Please send me a brief description of your program. If you are active in the Railroading Merit Badge program and would be interested in being a regional coordinator, please contact me. In either case, I can be reached at scouts@hq.nmra.org.

LADIES ONLY!

Petticoat Junction

NON-RAIL

The Non-Rail Gang committee is working hard to put together some great activities for you. At our last committee meeting I mentioned that the 2008 convention in Houston was my first experience. All the ladies thought maybe this would be a good thing to write about for those ladies who haven't been to a convention with their husbands before. *So, here it is… my first convention. As you read about "the expectations I had, versus my actual experiences", we hope you will realize that the LSR Convention is as much about the ladies as it is the guys. And, we also hope that you decide to come join-in on all of the fun next June!*

My husband, Jerry, has been active in railroad modeling for several years. He's gone to many conventions over the years and had always asked if I would like to go with him. Now, my thought process went a little like this: First of all I work and most of the time I really couldn't take the time off to go. There were other times when I could get away, but thought what am I going to do there?

· I love seeing the talent that goes into design and construction of layouts, buildings and rolling stock, but I don't want to participate in their clinics.

I like going on the home tours and seeing how they have set up they're layouts. But really, one or two of those would be more than enough right…so the rest of the time?

There's operating events, but that's not my thing.

Sitting around watching TV or reading the rest of the time wasn't the least bit appealing, I can do that in the comfort of my own home.

Well, as it happens sometimes, an event comes to pass that gives you a little push. Jerry agreed to chair the *Trinity River Interchange 2009* in our region, (guess who will definitely be going in 2009 now?) and would I please help the ladies plan the Non-Rail Events?? Now, how can I make any constructive suggestions or provide ideas if I've never participated in a convention? Do you notice a trend developing here with lots of questions but not much in the way of answers???

Ok, we're off to the Ironhorse-8 convention in Houston. Jerry is excited about participating in the operating events, judging the models, seeing the home layouts, and so on. What I didn't realize was that he was worried about me. "Would there be enough to keep her occupied? When we sent in our registration she had signed up for a couple of the Non-Rail events; a tour, a clinic. What is she going to do the rest of the time?" Ladies, can I just interject here, that I brought along 6 paperback books to pass the time with. Now I'm a very fast reader and there was all this time I was going to have to while-away right?? Wrong!!

Let me give you a synopsis of my experience. I had dinner with the ladies with lots of laughter and discussion on the events coming up. We played games in evening on a couple of nights. Two mornings of touring home layouts with my husband, ooing and ahhing over the fantastic ingenuity! A full day tour with the ladies that started with a fantastic homemade breakfast in Caroline and Byron Spampinato's beautiful backyard. Followed by a shopping and lunch in lovely Old Towne Spring. Great clinics that covered everything from jewelry construction, cookies in a jar, to making Christmas decorations. There were several I didn't even have time to attend. Then there was the late afternoon at Zube park where everyone enjoyed live steam train rides and a great BBQ dinner. And of course, the evening banquet & awards program, and the closing convention breakfast. Can I just say that I didn't finish the one book I had started before leaving for the convention let alone the other five!!!

Jerry and I were driving home reminiscing over the past days when he finally admitted he was worried that I would be bored. NOT A CHANCE!! I had more fun in the clinics and tours and met some wonderful people that I absolutely look forward to visiting with again!

If you've ever entertained the thought of possibly attending a convention but wasn't sure if there would be anything for you to do, please let me assure you that they are a BLAST!!! It's a great opportunity to share a little bit of your husband's interest and meet some great ladies and have some fun for yourself too. We're working hard to put together some fun clinics and tours. Please keep checking the Marker Lamp, our on-line site, and the Trinity River Interchange Gazette for information on developing clinics and tours. We all hope that next June 3rd – 7th, 2009 you'll join us for some great times!!
See you here!!

Phyllis Hoverson

Continued from page 7

Micro Mark Stain

The tool specialists Micro Mark have also come out with their own line of liquid stains to go along with Doc O'Briens pigments. They are called RR Tie and Bridge Stain and Age It Easy. These two products are Alcohol Based and as such we haven't tried them. What's the point in being redundant. If you find something that works using alcohol, why change.

Milk Paint

Yes, this is paint made from milk and can be bought commercially although it can be very hard to come by. Wal-Mart, Hobby Lobby, and Michaels stores used to sell it, but they no longer do. The container even looked like an old milk bottle. It went on very smoothly and stained wood real well. Unfortunately we have used up our supply, and now we can't find it anymore. We have heard that you can make your own using acrylics diluted with milk, but we have never tried that, YET. Gee, wonder if you can use Chocolate milk as a stain?

This is all the techniques for staining we have used. We are positive there are countless more that we don't even know about. At this point we really don't need another method. We hope you will try one of these methods to stain wood. And remember, "Nature is not Monotone" so experiment with several of these techniques to achieve the different colours you want on your models.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

by Elbert Smith

LSR Financial Accounts (October 1, 2008)

Beginning July 1, 2008		
Checking Account	$1.337.70	
Vanguard Money Market Accts Total	$45,506.12	
Funds Held For Div. 1 (Not LSR Funds)	$1,990.67	
Funds Held For Div. 3 (Not LSR Funds)	$225.60	
Total LSR Net Worth – All Accounts		$44,657.85
Checking Account Income		
Ad, Pike	56.00	
Cars	80.00	
NMRA Dues Returned	7.00	
NMRA Rebate	1,007.00	
Transfer From Money Market	2,000.00	
Vanguard MM (CD Fund)	177.30	
Vanguard MM (Convention Fund)	56.24	
Subtotal		$3,383.54
Checking Account Disbursements		
Cars - Shipping	5.00	
Marker Lamp Print & Mail	1,266.99	
Postage (Accumulated)	35.31	
President Expenses	2.49	
Subtotal		$1,309.79
Vanguard Money Market		
Transfer to 2009 Convention Acct		$4,700.00
Ending June 30, 2008		
Checking Account	$3,411.45	
Vanguard Money Market Accts Total	$38,806.12	
Funds Held For Div. 1 (Not LSR Funds)	$1,960.37	
Funds Held For Div. 3 (Not LSR Funds)	$225.60	
Total LSR Net Worth – All Accounts		$40,031.60

Total NMRA/LSR Membership inside the LSR area on June 30 was 1051. Two years ago, the total NMRA/LSR membership inside the LSR was 1018. New Members – Please take note of these 26 new NMRA/LSR members. They're listed alphabetically by state and by city, and their Division number is shown, to help identify those who live in your area. When you run into them, say hello, and invite them to attend your model-railroading activities

Louisiana Philip Haerer, Kenner, LA, 02

Texas Robert Lambert, Austin, TX, 04
Mike O' Neill, Bulverde, TX, 06
James Engle, Conroe, TX, 08
John Gutekunst, Conroe, TX, 08
Eugene Moon, Conroe, TX, 08
Charles Clark, Crosby, TX, 08
Richard Moore, Dallas, TX, 03
Darcy Zarubiak, Dallas, TX, 03
David Jeter, Denison, TX, 03
Kathleen Tucker, Granbury, TX, 01
Fred Tucker, Granbury, TX, 01
Jerry Proctor, Hurst, TX, 01
Alan Vann, Kingwood, TX, 08
Greg Miserak, Lake Kiowa, TX, 01
Greg Hair, Midland, TX, 05
Frank Fertitta, Missouri City, TX, 08
Richard Kuelbs, Richardson, TX, 03
John May, Richardson, TX, 03
Lawrence Walsh, San Antonio, TX, 06
Gary Blackburn, Savoy, TX, 03
Juan Celorio, Spring, TX, 08
Bradford Greene, Spring, TX, 08
Marc Vandendriessche, The Woodlands, TX, 08
Philip Willman, MD, The Woodlands, TX, 08
Richard Barter, Tomball, TX, 08

Cowcatcher Division 1

by Chris Atkins

Hi all, I hope this latest report finds you all doing well and working hard on your layouts.

It's hard to believe that the 2009 LSR convention will be in our neighborhood in less than nine months. The committee is making a lot of progress towards making the Trinity River Interchange be the best convention ever. Besides all the old standbys like contests, the auction, layout tours, etc. this year we are featuring a ride behind the 1896 steam engine on the Grapevine Vintage Railroad. The best part is that the trip is sponsored by the Region and it will be free with your registration. Take a look at www.trinityriverinterchange.com for more information.

The division had a special meeting in August. After the normal meeting, we all went to Jack Kibee's layout in Ft. Worth. If you haven't had a chance to see Jack's layout in person, you have missed a special treat. Jack is undoubtedly one of the area's best modelers and his specialty is super detailed scratch built and craftsman structures. But Jack's layout is no museum piece. His group of regulars operate his layout ever Wednesday evening.

In October, the LMRA club held their annual show. Unfortunately, I was out of town, but heard that it was a very successful show; perhaps their best ever. The show was held in conjunction with the Circus Model
Builders/Carnival Historical & Model Builders national convention chaired by Bob Bray. The expanded show featured several rooms of circus and carnival displays, which were very popular.

This year, the Ft. Worth Train Show will be held December 13-14 at the Ft. Worth Convention Center Hall A, 1201 Houston St. , Ft. Worth, TX. This is a new venue and a new weekend. This is an exciting change for the train show. We all hope that we can get the word out and make the Ft. Worth show the area's premier show. As always, we will have a booth to promote the NMRA, the LSR and the Cowcatcher Division. Let me know if you can help with the booth or volunteer in some other way.

Now is a good time to turn in your nominations for the Cowcatcher Division youth scholarship. If you have a son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter, nephew, niece or neighbor kid that has some interest in model railroading, then send his name in with a short note explaining why they are deserving, and he/she can receive a scholarship for a year's NMRA membership. Also, if you have a youth in your club or maybe there's just a kid hanging around, send me their name.

The winter meeting will be held November 15th at 10AM in room one of the LMRA administration building - 3400 Bryant-Irvin Rd. I hope to do a clinic on making photographic mockup buildings using free software. For more information contact me at chris@railroadmodelers.com. I hope to see you all there.

Be sure to check out the new Division 1 website at www.cowcatcherdivision.com.

Bayou Division 2

by Dick Schneider

Whew! These last few months have been quite exciting and plenty interesting. GUSTAV paid us a visit in the Gulf Coast area but did very little, if any, damage to the model railroads in this Division. GUSTAV took a personal dislike to my house in New Iberia and did his best to move it elsewhere. He took most of my shingles, tarpaper, windows, and trees with him but left the train room untouched. IKE came soon after creating lots more debris, but again left the model railroads alone. Remember, during the next hurricane, stick close to the model railroads

Midsouth Model Railroad Club visited Belle Vista, AR and operated on several of the fine model railroads in that area. If you haven't been there yet, be sure to put it on your "To Do" list. Midsouth also holds operating sessions open to all on the first Saturday of the even numbered months. The next one will be December 6th from 1:00 pm to 5ish. The Baton Rouge Model Railroad Club is working to complete its DCC project. Lou Shoultz's C & O in Covington is running well, and Art Houston in Houma has completed his new building and will soon be starting on his new layout. The Crescent City Model Railroad is converting to DCC.

I visited with the Lake Area Model Railroaders Club in Lake Charles a few weeks ago and got to visit with the club members, see the club layout, and visit Phil Legers' layout as well. LAMRC is building its railroad, the Sweet Lake & Gulf, in the Children's Museum at 327 Broad Street, Lake Charles, LA. 70601. The club currently has 10 members and has been located in the museum since March, 2005. They meet every Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm and each Saturday morning at the museum. The model railroad is 70% complete. Visit with them one Saturday and watch the children thoroughly enjoy themselves.

Phil Leger's Fiddler's Pass Railroad is HO scale and is 90% complete. Phil is enthralled with the Southern Pacific and its Cab Forwards. He uses Digitrax Radio controlled DCC complete with ABS fully operational signals. The 24 X 30 Pike has all hand laid track and turnouts and runs very well. Phil is also a custom Bridge Builder. Some of the examples I saw were fantastic. Phil's been a model railroader since 1972 and it really shows in his modeling.

This should bring us current for this issue. Next issue we will examine the other model railroads in our district and reacquaint ourselves with them. My best to Jack Green, my predecessor. He left a great legacy and I hope to expand on it

North East Texas Division 3

by Duane Richardson, MMR

Fall is here and so it the local Train Show season. By the time you read this the Fall Lockheed show will be behind us the Ft. Worth show will be just around the corner. After the declining numbers at the last couple of Annual Division 3 meets we decided that this year we would hold another show at the Nicholson Memorial Library as the Annual Meet. This works out as a nice draw for the library and a way for us to share the hobby with the public. At our first show we had around 350 people and this year we had around 500 people, mostly parents and kids, come through to see the layouts on display. I would like to thank the Texas and Beyond z-scale club and Ark-La-Tex for bringing their HO layout. The library is kind enough to allow us to host our monthly meetings and this is just a nice way to help say thanks. All of the display cases in the lobby of the library housed many photos, models,books and other train memorabilia to get the folks interested. I would also like to thank Larry Swigert for his help with the displays among his many other tasks that weekend. I would also like to thank Discount Model Trains for sponsoring the show.

We started a pair of scratch building clinics where our members are building flat cars. These hands-on clinics had around a dozen folks building cars in various scales. We will be wrapping those up in October and in November Jerry Hoverson will be giving a clinic on controlling a Tortoise switch machine from more than one location. His clinic will also cover doing an index matrix as well. While December is still way off in the future, there is no telling what Casey Claus might bring our way. We might have to make some mountains for Christmas.

For the Plano Train show this coming January we will need volunteers to help us man the NMRA table. We could also use some volunteers to help with other show duties. If you are able to help us for an hour here or there please let me know.

Lastly, next year we will be electing a new Director for Division 3. Sadly, due to changes at work and the growth of my family, I will not be able to run again in 2009. If you have any interest in running please let me know. It has been a wonderful 3 years and I'm looking forward to what we have in mind for Division 3 between now and when I hand it off in June of 2009. Please give this some thought as it is a great way to give something back to the hobby and the NMRA.

I hope to see you all at the next meeting.

Cen-Tex Division 4

by Bill Dryden, Jr

Background from a third person perspective:

At the last elections, our esteemed Division 4 Director, Bob Alston, ceded his directorship to pursue a different calling on his life. He certainly will be missed. Fortunately for Division 4, Chuck Lind, MMR, stepped up to fill the gap and successfully campaigned for the position, running unopposed. However, as LSR Publications Chair & Marker Lamp Editor, as well as being the LSR Contest Chair, adding the load of Division Director was taking on quite a responsibility. Not that he would not have done well in all three positions, of course, knowing Chuck.

As things would have it, Bill Dryden, LSR Director at Large, had relocated from Gonzales (Division 6) to Georgetown (Division 4). After some discussion at the LSR Convention in

Houston, Bill and Chuck jointly requested the LSR Board to allow them to swap positions. The Board voted to accept the proposal and Division 4 takes on a new but somewhat familiar face. Bill has returned to his "home" division, having grown up in Bryan and the LSR still gets to keep the support Chuck has for the LSR as a voting member.

On to more current events .....

I look forward to serving Division 4 in the coming years. I have already talked with a local church pastor and he is willing to allow us to use a meeting room for our Division meetings. I am ready to meet the Division Members I do no yet know and to re-new fellowship with the members I have known since becoming active during the late 70s/ early 80s. I am getting started with Division activities, with lots of ground to cover. I solicit help from all members of the Division; please e-mail me at bdr149@airmail.net when you have news and events.

Centra-Mod had to cancel its 26th Annual Train Show in Temple due to the convention center being used by people displaced by Ike. Jack Merkel had folks over for two operation session on October 4th, one in the morning and then again in the afternoon. I understand good times were had by all in attendance. Wish I could have been there, but had spent several weekends out of town an was not able to attend.

I know there is lots of activity in our Division and will remind all, I need and solicit your help to be able to report it to the Region. So please e-mail me at bdr149@airmail.net when you have news and events.

Division 6

by Fred Bock, MMR

Let me start this off by echoing the recognition given at the LSR Convention to our Division's three LSR Youth Membership recipients: **William Watkins** (AMRE), **Al Arriega** (SANTRAK), and **Ciera Skinner** (SAMRA). This is the first time that Division 6 has had *three* recipients. Each received a 1-year student membership in the NMRA, including *"Scale Rails"* magazine.. William attended the LSR Convention with his dad, "**Woody" Watkins**, and Al attended with his "granny", **Charlotte Boord** (SANTRAK). **Al Arriega** also was the selectee for the **Sam Brendel Youth Scholarship** award. This award, made possible through the generosity of LSR member Bob Brendel, provided a significant grant to offset the cost of attending the LSR convention in Houston. To this, **LSR Division 8** waived the convention fees, and admissions for Al to participate in the 3-day "Modeling with the Masters" clinic put on by **Tracy Mitchell** during the convention was covered by a LSR member who wants to remain unkown.

I apologize for missing the deadline for the last issue of the *Marker Lamp*. I got . . . distracted this summer, to put it mildly. The very Sunday afternoon **Tom Crosthwait** and I got back from the LSR in Houston to return borrowed items from **Texas Transportation Museum**, I arrived to find that the wiring of the **Alamo Model Railroad Engineer's** (AMRE's) 8'x100' HO layout had finally given up the ghost. The layout had originally been wired for DC block control shortly before DCC came upon the scene. It had been patched over the years with "work arounds" to convert it to DCC, but the basic wiring was still to old DC standards, and the band aids on the band aids for the band aids finally weren't enough. The most viable solution? Rewire from scratch for DCC.

So, last year's Division 6 Youth Scholarship recipient **John Stabe** and I spent three months, 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, tearing out old wiring and replacing it with new. Some of the buss and track wiring used multicolored telephone wire – the 26 gauge stuff – with runs as long as 100'! So, we installed brand new buss wiring using NMRA-standard Red and Black 12-gauge AWG wire, twisted about 1 turn per foot to reduce noise. The telephone-wire leads from drops to buss were replaced with minimum 18-gauge Red and Black wire, twisted, for runs up to about 3', and 16-gauge wire for longer distances. All connections were soldered and insulated with heat shrink tubing or tape. Most of the drops were useable as is, but about 30% had to be resoldered or replaced. And, we removed trash barrels full of old wiring, some of which had been unused for years but just never removed.

All this, mind you, in the middle of a South Texas summer in an un-air-conditioned metal building, 40x100', where the ventilation was open garage doors at each end and lots of fans running. And, trying to keep trains running on the mainline on weekends for visitors to the Museum. (We did have to take the mainline out of service for one weekend while we were connecting the mainline to the new mainline buss).

The layout now runs smoothly. In fact, markedly smoother than before. The layout used to be plagued by numerous "shorts" occurring during "Fun Runs". Now, a few weekends ago, AMRE had four long drag freights running simultaneously with MU'ed power with not a short nor an electrical problem.

So let me catch up on some of the news of the past several months. Seems as if there've been a plethora of train shows and events: the **LSR Convention** in Houston in June, the Balcones Heights **(SAMRA)** show in July, the New Braunfels (**Bryan Weidner**) show in August, and the Live Oake **(AMRE**) show the first weekend of October.

And, there are more to come. In December, the **Texas Transportation Museum** (TTM) will hold its annual "Santa's Railroad Wonderland" holiday event on the museum grounds at Wurzbach Parkway and Wetmore Road in San Antonio. The last weekend in January is the traditional date for the annual **SAMRA** Model Railroad Jamboree and Train Show at the Live Oak Civic Center. Two weeks thereafter, for the first time, **"The World's Greatest Hobby"** nationwide traveling road show will come to the Convention Center in downtown San Antonio.

One of the good things about all of these shows is the opportunity for clubs and individuals with portable (well, transportable) layouts to set up and share their work with the rest of us. Clubs in Division 6 with transportable layouts include **SANTRAK** (N-scale N-trak and T-trak), **Gulf Western Modular Railroad Society** (HO) (GWMRRS – Corpus Christi), **San Antonio Z-Bend** (Z-scale), **San Antonio Garden Railway Engineering Society** (SAGRES – TTM), **Hill Country Outlaws** (On30), and **SAMRA**'s modular HO layout. You can see many of these layouts at each of the train shows that take place during the year.

The **Gulf Western Modular Railroad Society** also got some national recognition this past July at the **NMRA National** Convention and Train Show in Anaheim, California.

GWMRRS members **Vince Smith**, **Chris Grote**, and **Mike Huber** towed the GWMRRS trailer from Corpus Christi to Anaheim and set the layout up for operation during the Convention. The layout received the NMRA Convention **Chairman's Award** for the best modular layout; the Award included a handsome plaque.

Finally, a word of congratulations to new officers at SAMRA**: Ron Nagel** (President), **Wayne Hammelman** (VP), **John Lowrance**, MMR (BOD) and **Al Boos**, MMR (BOD). Ron, John, and Al have been members of SAMRA for over 20 years, and they will provide a good source of historical continuity for the club.

That's it for the moment. Let me wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving, Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas, Meaningful Kwanza, and a Happy New Year. See you next time.

Division 7

by Don Kimmell

Greetings from still green North Louisiana, where we are still waiting for fall.

We are in the full swing of the fall train show season that is if a hurricane does not mess things up. I have just returned, along with the Ark-La-Tex Crew, from a great LMRA Show. Bob Bray and his able assistants did a wonderful job, plus he was also having the National for the Circus Train Modelers, WOW!!!! Of course I understand, Bob is about ready to fall down from an overdose of trains, if that is possible. We had a great time, and the vendors had a good bit to sell, at some very good prices!! It was my impression that the attendance was up this year, and boy, you should have seen the number of families, who seemed to be buying that little blue tank engine. I saw very few folks leaving without a bag of some sort. I think everyone had a good time.

I had some judging done on some of my structures, for the Achieve Program, and I wish to thank Duane, Tom B., David and Allen for helping me out. Thank You!!!

We did a recruiting show for Duane and his Division back in September, we set our modules up in the Garland Library, to see if we could add to his division, We had a fun time, bit rough getting everything in, we couldn't set up our whole layout, it seems the folks at the library did not want to get rid of some of those books to give us some more room, strange, just could not understand, books over trains. But everyone had a good time, and I think we might have gained a few more folks for the hobby.

Had a great e-mail from Lou Bangma down Alexandria way. He and a few other folks are running a very successful Junior Engineer program at the TREE house Children's Museum. They were donated a complete layout, including a DCC system, and convinced the Museum to give them a home. This is a youth/family program, 6 weeks in length for 2 ½ hours on Saturday mornings. They are doing a wonderful job, getting to play trains, while teaching our hobby's future generations. GREAT WORK Guys!!!!!!

On the upcoming front. The JETTS Longview Show is now scheduled for the LAST weekend in March 09'. Please mark your calendars. For a small show, it always is a lot of fun, and there is always a great group of vendors, so you can spend the litter extra bit left over from Christmas.

Speaking of Christmas, the elves have been hard at work on this year's edition of KCS' Holiday Express. The red caboose is no longer red, but has visited Mid America for a paint job, it is now white, but the Man In Red will still be in residence, despite the color change, something about he needed the color to remind him of home. The new HO layout has been totally reworked, a few things added, so look for it in the green/Elves Workshop caboose. A few more things, items, people, autos, trucks and trees have been added to the 2 "big" layouts, I won't say more, you have to look! OK, this is a Heads-up for the NE Texas folks….. You will be getting a visit this year…so mark your calendars…..

Monday, 1 December-Jefferson Texas Downtown, between E.Austin &Lafayette

Tuesday, 2 December-Wylie, Texas KCS Yards, 3939 Skyview Ct (Here is your chance MetroPlex to see it!!)

Wednesday 3 December-Sulphur Springs, Texas Between Cedar St & Oak Avenue

This will be the only visit the Holiday Express will be making to Texas this year. After this leg, we are off to the northern end of the system, so if you want to see 50,000 plus mobile lights, not to mention the Man-IN-Red, here is your chance!!

I am sorry if this is a bit rambling, as I have been working on a couple of my APs….

I want to wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!! Look for an "ELF" report early next year!

Texas Gulf Division 8

by Ray Byer

Well we have made it past the convention, the heat, and two hurricanes? We have taken some hard hits in Division 8, but we have made it past them and moving on to the sunny side. As Tracy has said in e-mails about the storm, there are some layouts and place down. But they will be back up and running. Byron is checking with a lot of the Houston area home layout to see if they will be open in OCT, NOV, and DEC for the Annul Layout tours here in Houston. Most of them will be open but you will need to check the San Jac website for update on opening and closing of layouts.

Division 8 has had it Annual election of new Board members. At this time I wound like thank all of the old members for their hard work they have done in the past. To all the new Board Members welcome aboard, looking forward working with you. To all of Division 8 Members I hope all of your homes are in good shape and you have electric, cold air and friend to run trains with.

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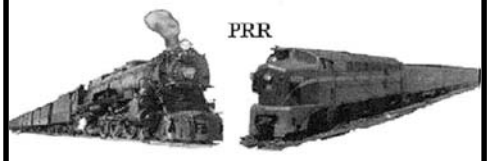

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